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## ART. VII. — AMERICA IN AFRICA.

## PART II.

*Productions.*

THE chief products of Liberia are sugar and coffee and india-rubber. The best plantations of coffee and sugar are on the St. Paul's. Up this river are the chief settlements. There lies, more than on the sea-shore, the future of America in Africa. The river is very broad and handsome, as broad and handsome as the Hudson. For about forty miles, or as far up as the Connecticut, it is navigable for sloops and even larger craft. For four miles back from the river coffee is cultivated. It is sold for twenty cents a pound, gold, at Monrovia, which gives it a higher valuation in New York than the Java. It is being exported now to Ceylon to replace the coffee of that island, itself among the best in the world. Three dollars, gold, a bushel is paid for it at Monrovia for this purpose. It is also being planted in Southern California. The coffee-tree is usually a trim, compact, small tree, not over twenty feet high nor fifteen feet wide at its widest part. The annual production is already very large and steadily increasing.

The two chief coffee-farms are those of Mr. Dorsey, a Liberian, and Messrs. E. S. Morris & Co., of Philadelphia, whose exposition of Liberian products at the Centennial attracted great and deserved attention. They have on their farm on the St. Paul's, which they have leased for twenty-five years, thirteen thousand coffee-trees. Thirty pounds have been taken from a tree in one season; two and a half pounds is the average. This would give for the yield of this place over thirty thousand pounds a year. Suppose neglect or blight reduced that one half, and we have fifteen thousand pounds, worth three thousand dollars, as the annual produce of a single plantation. Mr. Rix, of Clay Ashland, raises from ten to fifteen thousand pounds annually. The last vessel to New York, which arrived last June, had over eighty thousand pounds in its invoice. That portion which the shippers held was sold for twenty-five cents a

pound in gold before it reached port. It is evident, therefore, that, unless some drawback occurs, this product will draw capital here, and make the Republic a not unimportant factor in the mercantile exchange of the world.

India-rubber is also becoming an article of commerce. There are many sorts of trees and plants which furnish this substance. A commission has been granted to a Brazilian trader, giving him the exclusive right of export. This will probably be broken up, as the traffic is too valuable and too much diffused to be concentrated in any single house. A Boston gentleman, engaged in this business, informed me that he alone purchased two hundred thousand pounds of African rubber during the past year. As this rubber is worth in Boston not less than forty cents a pound, or nearly a million dollars for the whole, it shows how valuable this trade may yet become. Cameron says over £45,000, or \$225,000, was the value of this export in a single year at Zanzibar. It can be gotten on the market much cheaper from Liberia. Gold also is reported to exist in the mountains, and an English company has sought to make a contract with the government for the working of its mines.

#### *Its Political Condition and Population.*

What is the political condition of the country? The invasion of European merchantmen, and their refusal to recognize the government of the American Colonization Society, compelled the establishment of the Liberian government. When the governors of the Society complained of their course, they replied in substance: "England we know, and America we know, but who are you?" America at that time was unwilling to recognize a territory that was occupied by that class of its citizens, as it would encourage their enslaved brothers at home in the idea that they had some rights which should here be respected. There was no alternative, therefore, but for the colony to proclaim its independence. This was done in July 26, 1847, in a declaration too closely copied from our own, in which they declare that prejudice has driven them from our shores, and talk as if their independence was being declared from America, rather than from a nearer and more dangerous foe.

That such an independence was premature is evident from the history of all other colonies. In twenty-five years after its establish-

ment it became an independent state. It was one hundred and sixty-eight years from its first settlement at Jamestown that English America became independent. Spanish America was three hundred years a dependency of that crown. South Africa is not independent yet, nor Australia, nor Canada. How preposterous, therefore, to expect that Liberia, after only twenty-five years of existence, should become a commonwealth, with power to make its flag respected, to carry on internal improvements, to make war, to issue currency, and do all other things belonging to an independent government! Sierra Leone, forty years its senior, within twelve years of its first century, is not yet a state, independent, self-reliant, and able to live among the governments of the earth. That Liberia does as well as she does is a marvel.

The government imposes a tariff, but is not always able to collect it; in that respect being not unlike other governments. It complains of the steamers for selling from their decks in the harbors, but they reply, "If you try to stop us, we will leave your harbors altogether, and decline to carry your mails." As they are the only means of mail communication, the Republic is compelled to submit. To be weak they find is miserable, but so is all weakness. They have equal difficulty in collecting the taxes from their own citizens. President Payne, in his message last December, complains that some American Liberians oppose taxation, and acknowledges "there is nothing to force a tax-collector to make a faithful return," so that the government may lose through the peculation of its own officers, — a thing also not unknown in older and stronger countries. Despite these drawbacks the Secretary of the Treasury reports last year's receipts from taxes and duties, ending September 30, 1876, to be \$113,026.34. Probably Virginia could not have shown so good an account in 1662, fifty-five years after its first outcasts were landed at its Monrovia.

The disbursements were \$155,551.07. The war with the Grebso cost \$60,000. But for that, the income would have covered the expenses. The President and other officials are courteous gentlemen, and probably manage the affairs of state as well as any persons of any land could under like conditions.

The population of Liberia is far smaller than it ought to be, considering the number of emigrants sent over and the money spent in colonizing. The American Colonization Society had spent, at

their semi-centennial in 1866, the immense sum of \$ 2,558,907.10. Over two million and a half of dollars had been contributed up to January 1, 1867. Since that, probably, a third of a million more has been given, making about three million dollars from this source alone. The churches have been very liberal. Special organizations for educational and other aid, bequests, legacies, gifts from individuals, some of which have been very large, and grants from States have, with the annual missionary contributions, carried the donations undoubtedly up to two millions of dollars. We may safely estimate the amount given in America to this enterprise at not less than five millions of dollars. If we include national aid, it will largely surpass this sum.

This vast amount of money has succeeded in establishing the colonies on the coast and settlements up the rivers St. Paul's Junk, St. John, and Sinoe. It has erected seminary and college buildings, churches, and a congressional building, and aided in the erection of many comfortable dwellings. But it has not moved many persons from America. Only thirteen thousand one hundred and thirty-six persons were sent out by the American Colonization Society in its first half-century. Probably a thousand is as many as have been sent in the last ten years; less than fifteen thousand persons at an expense of three millions of dollars. Recaptured Africans have been returned to the number of five thousand seven hundred and twenty-two. Or not far from twenty thousand have been planted in this territory in sixty years, an average of about three hundred a year.

Even with this small number there should have been to-day not less than fifty thousand American Liberians. There is no census, but the reputed number is not over twenty thousand; some put it as low as fourteen thousand. That is, there has been no increase on the original stock.

This failure to increase may be accounted for by the natural wear and tear of new settlements, by the unusual mortality of the males, who have overworked themselves in their ambition to subdue the land, a fact painfully patent, by acclimating fevers, which are always severer on new colonists than those who follow them, and chiefly, we believe, from the fact that they have had too much help. More money has been spent on Liberia, probably, than on any other colony known to history. Though we expatriated them,

we did not send them out empty. We loaded them with wealth. Five millions of dollars to fifteen thousand persons was a wonderful largess. No wonder they did not see the necessity of work. Every few months came a new batch of colonists. They were to be fed for six months at the Society's expense. This half supported the people who were to grant the supplies. The extinction of gratuitous emigration is essential to the prosperity of the Republic. The best thing that has happened to it was the aid of the American Colonization Society and kindred donations. The best thing that can happen to it is the cessation of that aid, or its direction to them through other channels.

#### *Necessities.*

What does Liberia need? More emigrants. The native population are becoming Americanized, but so slowly as to be of little benefit to the Republic. It must have large accessions from America if it is to flourish, or even if it is to live.

Not that so many will leave as to make any perceptible change in our ratios of population. The births will surpass both deaths and emigration. That factor in our society is growing larger rather than less. Since the first emigrants reached Africa, the African-American population has increased over two millions. The emigrants did not number fifteen thousand. There will be as little influence of any future emigration on the home population as there has been in the past.

Why then encourage emigration? To help Africa, not America. That will change the whole aspect of this question. It is to assist in Americanizing Africa. America is being Africanized; Africa should be Americanized. It is to better their own fortunes that emigrants should go, just as they come here from other lands. If they cannot better their fortunes, they will not go.

How shall this larger emigration be brought about? By steam communication, regular and frequent. There is only one firm in America that has a regular line to Liberia. That firm, Yates and Porterfield, New York, sends thither two, or at the most, three vessels a year. These vessels have no regular time of sailing, can carry but a few emigrants, and, being a long time on the voyage, — from forty to seventy days, — must charge a large amount for a ticket. Fifty emigrants at fifty dollars apiece is only twenty-five

hundred dollars, a small amount to the shippers for the space they occupy, which could be filled with merchandise, and for the expense of feeding them on so long a voyage. On the other hand, steamers could make the trip in fifteen to twenty days, could carry five hundred passengers, and would make money at twenty dollars a head. The emigrants also could raise this money themselves, or their friends there could help them, or they could have a society to help them in part. The first necessity is steam communication.

*Traffic with the Islands and the Coast.*

Nor would this be an unprofitable venture in a larger view of the case. The British steamers visit Madeira and the Canaries, and pass down the whole coast. They carry many passengers. I failed to get a berth, or even a place on a cabin lounge, on an outward-bound steamer at Bassa. It was crowded with passengers. We could have like success. The Western isles, Madeira, and the Canaries, themselves would support a steamer line. I have a letter before me from one of our consuls, Mr. Dabney of Teneriffe, stating that parties on the Azores would be glad to take stock in such a company. The trade and passenger traffic with Fayal is already valuable, and could be greatly increased by steam communication. So is it with Funchal, Santa Cruz, and Las Palmas. These charming islands, with their perfect climate, would be the resort of multitudes of our sick and tired folk, who now go to Florida to escape the rigors of our winter climate. The cochineal trade, already valuable, with fruit and other products, would make our connection profitable. From Grand Canaries, one island alone of the Canary group, fifteen thousand bags of cochineal, weighing two hundred pounds each, are exported annually. Its value fluctuates, but rises as high as seventy-five cents a pound. This single item has a value of nearly three millions of dollars.\* Tobacco, grapes, oranges, and other products abound. We saw in Teneriffe the first of February large fields of onions, for the Cuban market. These islands and the African coast would yield enough to maintain a line of freight steamers, if no passenger traffic was considered. But visitors to the islands and emigrants to Liberia would make that branch of the business large and remunerative.

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\* The first export of cochineal from Grand Canaries was in 1831, and amounted to eight pounds. In 1848 it had grown to 2,224,007 pounds; in 1876 it was over 3,000,000 pounds.

But another advantage of equal importance, if not of greater, will be the exchange of our commodities with this coast and the islands. The vessels which go from American ports carry tobacco, pork, fish, flour, and, we regret to add, rum. Some of them refuse to carry the last commodity, though no European ship declines to carry spirits of the most intoxicating kind. These ships could greatly enlarge and diversify their invoices. The demands of the natives for calicoes is very great. A yard of cloth or a leaf of tobacco is the current coin.

A yard of cloth is always reckoned at twenty-five cents, whatever its real value. The leaf is the unit of commerce, the yard its next numeration. We could dispose of these goods on this coast at great profits. So we could sell boots and shoes, which all the American-Africans wear. We could find a new market for lumber, which now sells at fifty dollars a thousand, for cheese, clocks, agricultural instruments, and multitudes of other notions which we can produce better and cheaper than Europeans, but for which we can have no market until we abolish the ox-carts of slow-sailing barques, beaten about by storms and hanging for days and weeks in most anti-business calms, and put our trade into iron and steam. To be over seventy days in getting from New York to Monrovia, which was the case with the captain of our vessel in doing the trip before ours, or to be forty-five days, which is a fair time, makes a round trip cover six months. The vessel which left the first day of last November arrived in New York May 10, making the trip cover six months and ten days. A steamer could go to the southwest coast and return, stopping to trade at all the ports of the islands and the coast, in from six to ten weeks. Four steamers would give us a monthly line to these islands and Africa. This would open a vast and most valuable field for our trade, and a not less valuable field for travel and emigration. Congress should establish this as a mail-route and should sustain it by subsidy.

Some statistics gathered from the British Blue Book for 1875 set these facts before us in a very striking manner. That report gives the amount of exports from these islands and the West Coast, and imports to the same, for the years 1870-1874. They show a steady increase of both traffics. They contain many other statistics bearing on this question. We give the figures for 1874:—



|                            | Imports.    | Exports.    |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Azores, .....              | £ 346,603   | £ 99,488    |
| Madeira, .....             | 71,656      | 281,301     |
| The Canaries, .....        | 430,898     | 223,499     |
| Portuguese Possessions,    |             |             |
| West Africa, .....         | 121,646     | 146,380     |
| Senegambia (French), ..... | 15,100      | 21,614      |
| British Possessions,       |             |             |
| River Gambia, .....        | 37,524      | 85,267      |
| Sierra Leone, .....        | 92,360      | 335,027     |
| Gold Coast, .....          | 468,605     | 512,000     |
|                            | <hr/>       | <hr/>       |
|                            | £ 1,582,392 | £ 1,704,576 |

That is, Great Britain sent thither, in 1874, of her products to the value of over eight and a half million dollars, and received nearly eight millions in return. The trade has steadily increased since that year.

It is interesting to notice the chief articles of commerce. In exports from the coast palm-oil leads, while fruits, wines, and cochineal make up most of the traffic from the islands. From all the west coast in 1874 there was imported 486,544 cwt. of palm-oil and kernels, valued at £ 518,134, or over two and a half million dollars; of india-rubber only 3,427 cwt. were imported, valued at £ 25,792; of coffee, 11,502 cwt., valued at £ 46,506; of spices and ginger, 8,803 cwt., valued at £ 20,908; and, noticeable fact to Americans, of raw cotton 11,315 cwt., valued at £ 32,839.

The chief articles sent out to the islands and coast were cottons, arms and ammunition, haberdashery, hardware and cutlery. Of these cotton was king. The whole number of yards of cotton cloth, mostly prints, sold at these ports for that year amounted to 47,217,966, or nearly forty-eight millions. Allowing thirty yards to a piece, and thirty pieces to a bale, there were over fifty thousand cases of calicoes, whose value was estimated at £ 745,179, or nearly four millions of dollars. Shall America utterly neglect so rich a field, with its hundreds of factories half idle and not a few completely at rest? If she wishes to undersell England in her cotton goods, she must not go to Manchester but to Africa.

Another disagreeable fact these books reveal, — that one hundred and twenty-four British steamers entered the ports of the Canary Islands in 1874, with one hundred thousand tons of ton-

nage, and not one from America. Eighteen sailing-vessels were all that came from the United States, of only five thousand tonnage, and eleven of these were whalers; leaving only seven merchant-ships, of two thousand two hundred tonnage, against one hundred and sixty-two British vessels (sail and steam), of one hundred and seventeen thousand tons. And the Canaries are not British ports, but would as gladly welcome American steamers as English.

It is also noted that in all these parliamentary statistics there is no mention of Liberia. She is included in the British possessions of the Gold Coast, so far as the government reports can do it.

#### *Annexation.*

Another thing needed to make the America in Africa a greater and even a great success is closer political connection with America. It was a sad day for the colony when its union with its motherland was sundered. It will be a bright day for that Republic when such relations are resumed. True, it had no political identity with our government, but that will be necessary on renewal of relations. It ought to be a territory of the United States, to become a state when its voting population has reached the legal number.

This would require a change in our theories. We have long proclaimed the Monroe doctrine as our national credo, America for Americans. Yet sixty years have brought us no nearer to it than when it was first announced. England and Spain still hold sovereignty here. Our government has not enlarged its territory perceptibly since that date, except in its acquisitions from Mexico, an American state. There is no probability of any proximate consolidation of this continent under a non-European flag.

On the other hand, since that proclamation, our commerce has extended to every port, our manufactures vie with those of every land, our connections are closer and closer with all continents. If the Monroe doctrine be claimed, America for Americans, then must the converse also be required of us, only America for Americans. This cord of our own twisting will strangle us in the end.

Our political system would easily adapt itself to this enlargement. For our Territories, with a delegate without vote in the

national House of Representatives, would bind our provinces closer to us than Rome's or England's, and as they developed into states they could easily become an integer of the World Republic.

It is a noticeable fact that the utterer of the famous saying was the first to practically annul it. For the share he took in the creation of this American colony his name was given to its capital. For twenty years he labored to plant America in Africa. His deeds rebuked his words. The Republic desires closer connections with the United States. It would not be just to say that it desires annexation, but it is very anxious for very close relations. In the last message of the President, delivered last December, he says: "The people of Liberia have had, all along their history, the duty imposed upon them to entertain the liveliest sense of gratitude to the American government. To it they have looked, for guidance and for help, more than to any other, in the great efforts to establish themselves where, untrammelled, they might develop their manhood, erect a government of their own, and take part in the solution of the problems that look to the enfranchisement and elevation of mankind."

Similar remarks, revealing their feelings towards this country, are found in many of their documents and in much of their conversation. The presence of the "Alaska" two years ago was a great gratification to the people. A lady remarked to me, "We had rather see one American vessel of war here than the whole British navy." She looked out to the old, weather-beaten, leaky barque which lay in the harbor bearing the American flag, and the white and red flag of its owners, "Y. & P.", and said, "I had rather see the ships of Yates and Porterfield, rare as are their visits, than all the English steamers," yet the latter drop their anchor every week, and the former not oftener than every hundred days. She spoke the sentiments of all the people. They talk America; they are Americans. They will make greater sacrifices to win our favor than that of all other nations. They will grant concessions to our government which they would not to any other nation. Their Constitution forbids selling land to any except colored persons, — a wrong regulation, — but they will lease land on long terms to any who desire such privileges.

Great Britain already has all the adjacent coast under her control. From the Gambia to the Gaboon, a distance of nearly two

thousand miles, she holds sway. One governor rules the whole. Liberia is the only break in this line. But for that, her sway would be complete from the Equator to Sahara. Of course this American Naboth does not please the kingly eyes. "How can he be swallowed up?" is the thought of many a representative of England. "We shall be swallowed up," is the fear of many an Afric-American.

*Railroad to Cairo.*

They need this closer relation to their own advancement in many lines. They need wagon-roads; they cannot make them. They need railroads; they cannot build them. They need a better land-office, where titles may be given to public lands and native claims extinguished. They need a better postal service. These absolute necessities they cannot themselves supply; they are too weak, too few, too poor. America should lend a hand.

Especially might the railroad be built. Scores, if not hundreds, of millions of European money have gone into our railroads. We might repay by building one across Africa.

As we entered the St. Paul's from the Stockton, Dr. Blyden pointed to a path which went up from the bank of the river, near a little Baptist Church at a place called Virginia City. "Do you see that road?" said he. "Yes." "That leads direct to Cairo. I have travelled it a hundred miles, and met in its towns Mohammedan teachers, who had walked from Cairo and even from Mecca." What an enterprise for American explorers would be the traversing of that path! Four thousand miles through an utterly undiscovered country! The projected wagon-road of the King of the Belgians, or the railroad of Cameron, or the proposed band of fifteen hundred explorers to be sent out by the European Geographical Society, would be lost to public view in Europe and America by the following up of that path to Cairo. It would pass through the richest and most important section of the continent. It would touch Timbuctoo, the Niger, the Wely, the Nyanza district, and the vast unknown territory that lies between the eastern and western centres. It would unite every explorer from Mungo Park to Henry Stanley; Lander and Barth and Park on the west would be joined to Baker, Schweinfurth, Speke, Grant, and Stanley on the east. Only Livingstone and Cameron, whose exploits are in Southern Africa, would be excluded from the list, and even these

would touch it at its eastern division by the Egypt and Good Hope Railroad, which would traverse all Livingstone's chief lines. This road is feasible, is necessary, is certain, is not far distant. Already Cameron urges a road from Zanzibar to Tanganyika, a distance of one thousand miles. He says it can be built for one thousand pounds a mile. It only remains to be seen whether America will help her first-born, her representative, her child still, in every pulse, to win this honor for herself and for us. Such an enterprise will give our trade and manufactures a new opening. Whenever that railroad to Cairo terminates on this side, thither flows the commerce of Africa. Monrovia can have that honor, if we will undertake with her and for her. Let the North Pole remain in its icy isolation, while this vaster, nobler, and more useful undertaking is furthered by our government.

The latest and greatest of African discoveries should increase our zeal. Stanley has revealed the secret, to find which Livingstone died and Cameron labored in vain. He has fought his way down the Lualaba, and proved that river and the Kongo to be one and the same. His discovery adds new honor to America. Three of the small company of explorers are her sons,—Ledjard, Long, and Stanley. Ledjard was almost the first who sought to master those secrets. Stanley is the last of the victors.

Each of them will be matched and surpassed by him who shall unite St. Paul's and the Nile, Monrovia and Cairo. That victory can be American also if she wills it. Already proposals for initiating it are being submitted. Let them be fostered by our citizens and by the general government.

No American should fail to sympathize with this struggling Republic. It is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. It is our contribution to the vast problem now being solved in that marvel of continents. It is the seed we plant in that rich soil. It is the leaven that we have placed in that mighty lump. We should study it in all its numerous and growing phases. We should see it in the light not only of its interests, but of our own also. We should form closer connections with it in business, and then we shall in politics. We should bind it to us by steam, by mail, by trade, by political alliance; in a word, we should help America in Africa for the sake of our own Africa in America.